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Roman Callimachus

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Abstract: A rehearsal of the influence and appropriation of Callimachus in Roman letters, intended as introductory reading for students and non-specialists. Includes short case-studies and exemplification, with an emphasis on the agendas, poetics, and rhetoric of Roman poets.

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## Roman Callimachus

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Callimachus was read in Italy through the entire late republican and the imperial period, and his poems were influential,<sup>1</sup> but in the context of our *Companion* it is more important to mention that his work is relevant to scholars of Roman poetry in a way that goes beyond measurable borrowings and allusions.<sup>2</sup> This is because the appropriation of Callimachean models is constantly enmeshed with the problems and dilemmas of Roman poetics: how to define, express, and control Hellenization; the relationship between poetry and politics or power; poetic careers, patronage, and public; the harmony and tension between programmatic statements and the poems themselves, as they are dynamically experienced and then remembered by readers. In the Augustan age, the effect of those allusions is enhanced by the fact that those Latin poets form a literary society and are likely to allude to their colleagues' recent manipulations and revisions of Callimachus as well as to the

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<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to the editors and to Marco Fantuzzi and Filippomaria Pontani for their comments.

The best guides to the influence of Callimachus on Latin texts are the different approaches of Wimmel 1960; Clausen 1964; Newman 1967; Zetzel 1983; Hopkinson 1988: 98–101; Alan Cameron 1995: 454–83 and *passim*; R. F. Thomas 1993 and 1999 *passim*; Hunter 2006a; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens forthcoming, chapter 4 (made available to me by the authors). Heyworth 1994 is shorter and selective but also very stimulating. On the imperial age, see McNelis 2007, with the bibliography there, and also below on Persius and Martial.

<sup>2</sup> As the temporal distance from the great papyrus discoveries of the early 1900s increases, it is important to remember that the programmatic approach would not have been possible before the discovery of the *Prologue* to the *Aetia*; it is interesting to compare the image of Callimachus in Latin studies before and after the discovery, and Benedetto 1993 is useful for Latinists as well as for Hellenists.

Greek texts as we have them. Indeed, one of the main reasons (besides the obvious ones) why we talk about an Augustan age in literature is this mix of cross-reference and reciprocal canonization. The use of Callimachean poetics typically raises questions about patronage, political agendas, and relationship to power that cannot really be addressed in the context of a short chapter and, in any case, are best discussed in a social and cultural framework,<sup>3</sup> not through close readings of individual passages. In this chapter, we will try to address some formal and poetic aspects, apart from consideration of the wider social setting of Roman poetry.

What we discover, on a formal level, is not so much reproduction as creative reuse. As a model to imitate, Callimachus is more difficult (note the implications of Statius *Silvae* 5.3.156–58; note also, from a Greek point of view, Pollianus *AP* 9.130)<sup>4</sup> than any other major Greek author, except for choral lyric, where the fading away of original musical scores and performance conventions increased the sense of a rift. This difficulty in a way intensified an aura of prestige: Catullus and Propertius are particularly proud of being able to handle him as a model. More important, Callimachus was a mentor about creative appropriation through his own operations on Greek models such as Homer, the theater, philosophy, and early lyricists:<sup>5</sup> those were canonical texts for the Romans, and they were able to recognize his art of variation and surprise. This way Callimachus became a poet's poet for the Roman community of literati.

### Propertius as the New Callimachus

Therefore some of the best Callimachean poetry in Latin is unruly, close to our notion of avant-garde, and even dares to test on him intertextual techniques that he himself practiced on earlier

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<sup>3</sup> For recent discussions of the big picture, see, e.g., Conte 1986; P. White 1993 (with Feeney 1994); Lyne 1995; Citroni 1995.

<sup>4</sup> See Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004: 248.

<sup>5</sup> On those intertexts, see, e.g., Acosta-Hughes 2010a; Fuhrer 1992; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens forthcoming.

Greek models. A short example from Propertius will illustrate this mode of imitation (Prop. 4.8.3–16):<sup>6</sup>

Lanuvium annosi vetus est tutela draconis:  
hic ubi tam rarae non perit hora morae.  
qua sacer abripitur caeco descensus hiatu, 5  
hac penetrat virgo (tale iter omen habet!)  
ieiuni serpentis honos, cum pabula poscit  
annua et ex ima sibila torquet humo.  
talia demissae pallent ad sacra puellae,  
cum tenera anguino raditur ore manus. 10  
ille sibi admotas a virgine corripit escas:  
virginis in palmis ipsa canistra tremunt.  
si fuerunt castae, redeunt in colla parentum,  
clamantque agricolae “fertilis annus erit.”  
huc mea detonsis avebast Cynthia mannis: 15  
causa fuit Iuno, sed mage causa Venus.

Lanuvium is the ancient protectorate of a snake of many years, there where an hour spent on such uncommon tourism is not wasted. For the sacred descent is broken by a blind chasm, where penetrates a maiden (such a journey bears an omen), the honor paid to the hungry serpent, when he demands his annual feed, and twists hisses from the depths of the earth. The girls lowered for these rites turn pale when their youthful hand is grazed by the mouth of the snake. The serpent snatches the food brought for him by the virgin: the very basket trembles in a virgin's grasp. If they have been chaste, they return to the embrace of their parents, and the farmers cry out, “It will be a fruitful year.” It was to this place that Cynthia drove off with her clipped ponies: Iuno was the cause, but Venus more so.

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<sup>6</sup> For text, translation, and interpretation, see Heyworth 2007a: 475–77 and 600.

The poem is unpredictable, the narrator is quirky, the details of local daily life are vivid, all in the best Callimachean tradition—yet when Callimachus is being visibly used he is also being subverted. The context of Book 4 of Propertius (see below) represents in general a departure from subjective love poetry toward a growing engagement with the tradition of the *Aetia*: thus when the new poem starts with a rare item of Italian antique lore, the snake ritual at Lanuvium, the readers easily accept the idea that Propertius is making good on his promise in the prologue to Book 4: a new Callimachus in the (Propertian more than authentically Callimachean) sense not of amatory elegy but of a poetic aetiology of Rome and Italy based on a close encounter with the *Aetia*. The effect is reinforced by the poet’s love for strange details—the sense of age-old memories, the dark snake pit, the horrified girls feeding the snake, their shaking baskets, and the test of virginity destined to the omen of a good year in the countryside (not without a Tibullan touch).<sup>7</sup> Even the considerable amount of sexual innuendo in the ritual description (“penetrat virgo”; the repetition “virgo . . . virgine . . . virginis” in lines 6, 11, and 12, completed by “si fuerint castae” in line 13) is potentially a homage to the *Aetia*. The strange nuptial ritual evoked in *Acontius and Cydippe* (fr. 75.1–3 Pf.) is not without its surprises, especially when the sentence “and now the boy had slept with the virgin” turns out to be a reference to a chaste prenuptial rite.

Yet exactly when we think we get the point that this is the long-awaited adaptation of Alexandrian poetry to the world of Italian antiquities, the poem turns on itself and loses contact with Callimachus. While Cynthia is in the Latin neighboring community of Lanuvium, Propertius parties in Rome, in her house on the Esquiline. The details are more lowbrow than in the rather ascetic and selective tradition of Roman elegy: two strippers, a dwarf providing entertainment, wine, and a slave in a supporting role. Comedy—or mime—erupts as Cynthia enters the house and catches the narrator red-handed. In sum, Propertius 4.8 promises Callimachean elegy in the *Aetia*

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<sup>7</sup> My mention of *Acontius and Cydippe* is purely illustrative: one could also think of rituals involving snakes, virgins, and baskets in the *Hecale*, and more generally of the trend toward strange and shocking rituals suggested by the fragments of Books 3 and 4 of the *Aetia*.

tradition, but only as a feint, then returns to a particularly humble variant of the love poetry that Propertius labeled (in a rather tendentious and different sense) a Callimachean opus back in Book 3. Propertius presumably learned from Callimachus how to ambush models and readers, and here he used Callimachus as his target. In his earlier books, he was practicing already: he was using Callimachus to justify something that Callimachus never contemplated—elegiac poetry about the author’s love affair with a woman.

### Ennius as a Post-Callimachean?

Familiarity with Callimachus—who never became a curricular author in Roman schools—presumably started, even before the Romans had regular schools, with the poetry of the *Epigrams*, since this was an influential genre in republican Italy and has links with the culture of symposia.<sup>8</sup> The first demonstrable influence of Callimachus is measured in the so-called pre-Neoteric poets (a dangerous label); in the previous generation, Lucilius, a poet of great versatility, must have known and imitated the *Iambi*. In general, even before Lucilius, Roman literature began, unlike Greek archaic poetry, with a boom in multigeneric authors,<sup>9</sup> whereas in Greek poetry before Callimachus multigeneric composition was never mainstream:<sup>10</sup> therefore, Callimachus was a congenial author and potentially a role model because of his *polyeideia*, in spite of the many differences. (For example, the centrality of the theater in republican Rome has no equivalent in the Callimachean outlook.)

Even before, Ennius offers a split picture. In the tendentious perspective of the Augustan poets,<sup>11</sup> Ennius is an inverted Callimachus, and a complementary defective example: strong on

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<sup>8</sup> From a later age, it is suggestive that Call. *Epigr.* 42 Pf. (8 GP) is epigraphically attested inside the so-called Auditorium of Maecenas, a place where a culture of wine and poetic performance must have been important.

<sup>9</sup> See Mariotti 1965.

<sup>10</sup> On Callimachus’ interest in maverick poets such as Ion of Chios, note Hunter 1997.

<sup>11</sup> Hinds 1998: 52–98.

*ingenium*, short on *ars* (Ovid *Trist.* 2.424), whereas Callimachus has universal fame through *ars* but lacks *ingenium* (Ovid *Amores* 1.15.14). In his own time, though, Ennius had been an experimental poet and a leader in the bicultural game of Hellenization and Romanization. It may well be that his polyphonic style and mixing of languages and glosses was in itself indebted to the innovative *koinē* of Callimachus.<sup>12</sup> His great epic, the *Annales*, suggests an even greater relevance of Callimachus, this time the *Prologue* to the *Aetia*. If true, this would be a crucial (and very early) episode in the *Fortleben* of Callimachus, but the textual evidence is fragmentary and controversial. Current reconstructions of the *Annales* offer this sequence in the first proœmium:<sup>13</sup> an invocation to the Muses; a dream; an encounter with the Muses; a revelation about Homer in the underworld, with his wraith speaking to Ennius and proclaiming him *Homerus redivivus*; the mountain of the Muses and its sources (although there are controversies about Helicon, Parnassus, or both).

Later on, in the proœmium to Book 7, there was emphasis on modernity: Ennius contrasted himself with older authors and issued the proud statement “we dared to open up . . .” (Fr. 19 Sk.: the object is, deplorably, missing; it may have been “gates” or “sources,” but the journey and the freshwater imagery would both be compatible with Callimachean programmatica.) Even better, it is possible that Book 15, the last one in a first edition of the *Annales*, closed with the foundation of a Roman temple for the Muses, the first cultic residence for the Greek goddesses ever in Rome—so it ended with the aetiology for the cult of the Muses in Rome (and *Musae* had been the first word of the *Annales*).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. Parsons in this volume; on the tantalizing *Satires*, cf. A. Russo 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Skutsch 1986.

<sup>14</sup> Critics usually, and rightly, point to Hesiodic influence, and this would be of course consistent with the tradition of the Callimachean *Dream*; Barchiesi 2001a: 90 adds the observation that Ennius may be thinking, *inter alia*, of a tradition of Pythagorean readings of Homer (cf. Aristoxenus fr. 91a Wehrli), a tradition at home in a place like Tarentum, the city where Ennius, we usually assume, will have studied Greek (and Oscan) letters.

Now, it would be dangerous to single out Callimachus as his main model. Admittedly, there are many different cultural strands in the *Annales*—Empedocles, Pythagoreanism, Platonism, Orphism, and a specific south Italian blending of those influences. The Greek models preferentially used by Ennius are various and disparate, but there seems to be a recurring feature: the idea of the Greek abroad and of diasporic identity, an idea crucial to the Hellenism of Callimachus (writing only a couple of generations before Ennius). The model of the *Aetia* may have been crucial, especially for the combination of geopoetics, poetic program, authorial career, dream, speaking Muses, philology and scholarship, and the negotiation of an antique model (Hesiod): even interest in philosophical traditions, a key factor in Ennius, should not be underrated in Callimachus.<sup>15</sup> The fact that Ennius is contrasted with Callimachus in a later age does not terribly matter here. It is usually objected that the *Annales* was a continuous epic, characterized by inflated style, massive Homerism, inordinate length, and repetition. But this objection is not definitive. The idea of inserting metapoetry and programmatic (even apologetic?) discussions into a national epic is post-Callimachean, although of course not a faithful imitation of Callimachus. Note especially that we don't know how discontinuous Ennian epic may have been. Not a single moment of narrative transition is preserved. Even if we assume the work to have been uniquely large (and there is no confirmation even of that), it cannot have contained all the material that we could extrapolate on the basis of Livy (the almost normative text used by us to reconstruct the historical layout—when it is available: the history covered by Ennius corresponds, at least in theory, and with the addition of a substantial prooemial section, to thirty-seven books of Livy!). The existence of fragments with long

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The end of Ovid's *Fasti* (in the six-book edition published by the poet) suggests a closural reference to the foundation of the Temple of Hercules Musarum at the end of Book 15 of Ennius: the final line, with Hercules harping on the lyre, may be read as a humorous correction of Callimachus *Aetia* fr. 23.5–6 Pf., on Heracles being incompatible with the lyre and even the cause of death for his musical teacher, Linus.

<sup>15</sup> Acosta-Hughes and Stephens forthcoming.

direct speeches and descriptions of minute details suggests by contrast the possibility of gaps, or swift bridge passages, or both.<sup>16</sup> In this perspective, the overall effect may have been not so different from that of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a text that we usually consider aesthetically antithetic to Ennius and a triumph of asymmetry and of hybridization between Callimachus and the traditions of heroic epic.

But conceivably the use of Callimachean resources for *The Dream* of Ennius indicates a compromise. The *Aetia* had Hesiod, not Homer, in the hard-hat area of programmatic statements; there we know that Hesiod was mentioned as having had a revelation from the Muses, and we gather that Callimachus was identified as a modern Hesiod. The new Homer of Ennius is a Hesiodic, Callimachean, modern Homer—hence the scientific didacticism of the speech of Homer in the Ennian proœmium?<sup>17</sup> This would give edge to the striking invention of the two Homers in Book 1, the ghost and the revenant: the doubling of the archaic model would not be unlike the double take on Hipponax in *Iambus* 1, the aggressive voice from the Ionic past and the revised, modernized Hipponax in Alexandria.

### Moderns versus Ancients?

For the Romans, one of the main contributions of Callimachus was the development of a critical polarization between ancient and modern. (Other relevant Greek experiments included Ion, Theocritus, the Hellenistic elegists, and post-Theocritean bucolics.)

The proœmium to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is a famous example of how the opposition can be deconstructed. The gods are being invited to “accompany” or “lead down” (*deducere*) the poem and its story line from the very beginnings of the world to modern times, and it will be a continuous poem (*perpetuum*). *Perpetuum* matches *diēnakes*, the ideal of the Telchines in the *Prologue* to the

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Cicero *Brutus* 76 on the absence of the First Punic War, the longest continuous war in human memory in Graeco-Roman antiquity, and the one already represented in Latin epic by the predecessor and competitor Naevius.

<sup>17</sup> On this and other aspects of Hesiod's Roman reception, see Rosati 2009: 344–46.

*Aetia*, but if the gods take Ovid's request seriously, the result of the operation of *deducere carmen* will be a *deductum carmen*—the buzzword of neoteric, elegiac, and Callimachean poetry. (Cf. *leptos* and *leptaleos*; Virgil *Ecl.* 6.5, “*deductum dicere carmen*”; Propertius 3.1.5, in an apostrophe to Callimachus and Philetas, “*carmen tenuastis*”; Horace *Ep.* 2.1.225, “*tenui deducta poemata filo.*”) If the reader misses the contradiction,<sup>18</sup> a continuous reading of the poem will demonstrate that this is not the epic continuity and fullness envisaged by the Telchines. Ovid will dedicate two half-lines to the foundation of Rome, presumably in order to save space for a list of thirty-seven dogs' names in the Actaeon story.

The new wave of realistic poetry in the Imperial age (Persius, Martial) still treated Callimachean poetry as recent and neoteric, but in a polemical way: Callimachus was now the straw man needed in order to enact a satirical poetics, and Catullus was invoked as a model but dissociated from his Callimachean poetics and mythological imagination.<sup>19</sup> The new twist was that for the ‘angry’ poets of satire and sarcastic epigram the new-wave poetry of the Callimacheans was in itself out of touch with the reality of Roman life, and therefore outdated.

The opposition between modern and ancient poetics in fact goes back to Catullus, who inaugurated the Roman tendency to identify the passé element with traditional epic about military success. Since Rome was a perpetually belligerent community, this negative pole can be identified as old-style republican poetry but also as contemporary panegyric (traditional in style but adapted to contemporary circumstances). Thus the Augustan poets were imparting a new significance (whatever the original said or implied about kings and heroes) to the initial opposition of the *Prologue* to the *Aetia*.

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<sup>18</sup> The pun was spotted simultaneously by C. D. Gilbert 1976 and by Kenney 1976; it is supported by the important reference to transformation of elegy into epic indicated by Tarrant 1982: 351 and n. 35, in a vindication of *ista* not *istas* in the text of *Met.* 1.2.

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., Bramble 1970; Mattiacci and Perruccio 2007.

## Programmatic Writing

In the generation of the Augustan poets, the single most consistent pattern of Callimachean ideas was the opposition of light and heavy, refined and grand. Every single image from the *Prologue* to the *Aetia*, the coda of the *Hymn to Apollo*, and the programmatic epigrams was refracted in many programmatic contexts in Horace, Virgil, Propertius, and Ovid. The idea of Apollo warning Callimachus about the norms of style had been readapted a number of times, and of course every new Latin author was known to engage with the shared Greek model but also with his Latin predecessors. What strikes us the most is the plasticity of the imitations. Not only can Apollo be transformed into a number of alternative mentors; more important, the poets vary the position of the encounter in time and context. In Callimachus, Apollo issues a warning before the poet embarks on his career (*Aetia* prologue) or offers a *viva voce* comment at the end of a text (*Hymn to Apollo*). In Rome, Apollo changes the choice of a genre during its performance (Virgil *Ecl.* 6.3–8), confirms the choice during attempted composition of an epic (Propertius 3.3.13–26), issues a warning about the new direction in a poetic project (Propertius 4.1.3–4, 133–36), criticizes a false start in a poetic career (Horace *Sat.* 1.10. 31–39), discourages the poet from abandoning his chosen genre (Horace *Carm.* 4.15), sabotages a work close to publication (Ovid *Am.* 1.1—although there the function of Apollo is taken over by Cupid). The only frequently shared concept is that Apollo always militates against a higher genre than the one the poet practices, but this sense of a preordained hierarchy is not Callimachean. When those poets are love poets, they combine the Callimachean message with a different strand, itself indebted to recent Greek poetry (Bion and the *Anacreontea*):<sup>20</sup> for a lover and a poet of love, writing in a higher mode is a physiological impossibility.

The poets compete in adapting the Apolline scenario to their own agenda: a witty example is a passage in Virgil that may have been the first (or second, after Cornelius Gallus?) direct rewriting of the *Aetia* prologue in Latin. The poet (*Ecl.* 6.1–8) sings of *reges* and *proelia*, Phoebus “plucks his ear” (*aurem vellit*) and warns him that a shepherd ought to raise fat sheep but produce a slender

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Fantuzzi 1994; Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004: 181–90.

song (*deductum dicere carmen*). Apollo calls the singer “Tityrus,” and this way we are not allowed to forget that *Eclogue* 6, although anomalous, is still part of the generic frame of *bucolica*. In the *Aetia*, Callimachus was contrasting a “fat victim,” always a good idea for a banquet, with a slender Muse: but the singer of the *Eclogues* is a shepherd; hence the conversion from “victim” to “sheep.”<sup>21</sup>

The other recurrent factor is related to one particular genre: elegy. While a number of poets participate in the programmatic game through allusions, explicit references to Callimachus are limited to that one genre; either they are in elegiac texts or, in the rare instances of another host genre, they are contextually related to the genre of elegy.<sup>22</sup> This stabilization is not without a certain straining of the Greek model and its originary values. The starting point for Roman elegiac poets seems to be the routinization of Callimachus as a *princeps elegiae* in the formal sense of the word; he can be singled out as the only luminar of elegy, or he can be paired with Mimnermus (cf. Horace, *Ep.* 2.2. 99–101), or Euphorion (cf. discussions of the problem of Virgil *Ecl.* 10.50) or, in Propertius, Philitas of Cos. Since elegy in Augustan Rome is not simply a formal category but the association of form (the distich) and content (love) and form of content (subjective), the Roman authors have a vested interest in extending the umbrella of Callimachus to cover their entire concept of the genre and its values and life choices. Now they seem to be happy with programmatic language indebted to the *Aetia* prologue,<sup>23</sup> but very few allusions point to specific texts (let alone

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<sup>21</sup> Cf., e.g., Hopkinson 1988: 99, and note Horace *Sat.* 2.6.14–15.

<sup>22</sup> Hutchinson 2006b: 9 n. 15. For my present purpose, we can neglect the distinction between elegy and erotic epigram. For explicit quotation of Callimachus and the persistent connection with elegy (or love epigram), or the location of the name in elegiac texts, cf., e.g., Catullus 65.16, 116.2; Horace *Sat.* 1.2.105–8, *Ep.* 2.2.99–101; Propertius 2.34.29–32, 3.1–3, 3.9.43–44, 4.1.64, 4.6.4; Ovid *Am.* 1.15.13–14, 2.4.19–20; *AA* 3.329; *Rem.* 381–82 (cf. 759–60); *Trist.* 2.367–68, 5.4.38; *Ib.* 53; *Pont.* 4.16.32; Statius *Silv.* 5.3.157 (for reference to elegy there, cf. Martial 10.4.11–12).

<sup>23</sup> For an attempt at fine-tuning the debate, see Hunter 2008b: 534.

programmatic statements) about love in Callimachus. The fact that his only famous subjective love poetry consists of pederastic epigrams is not a good match for the intentions of Propertius and Ovid (although Tibullus in this aspect fits the Callimachean model better);<sup>24</sup> nor is the twinning of Callimachus and Philitas, at least with our modest information on the latter, a very clear indication of how those Hellenistic poets are the legitimate leaders in elegiac poetry—if “elegiac” means “about a centrally positioned *domina*.” Ovid, who has a talent for insinuating his voice into his very models and turning them pre-Nasonian, or proto-elegiac, once singles out Cydippe as the representative of “soft, erotic” Callimachean elegy (*Rem.* 381–82: Cydippe is to Callimachus what Achilles is to Homer), and it may well be that his double letters dealing with that unusual story (a pair of elegies representing an exchange between Acontius and Cydippe, of uncertain date and somewhat disputed authorship: printed in our texts as *Heroides* 20 and 21) are a programmatic experiment,<sup>25</sup> and an attempt to redress the balance—here is finally a Roman elegiac poet who manages to offer an extended reworking of a Callimachean elegy, and one more compatible with the ideology of Roman elegy than previous adaptations or translations such as Catullus’s *Lock of Berenice* (*Carm.* 66).<sup>26</sup>

### The Dramatization of Poetic Choices

This emphasis on metapoetics has led to a notable evolution in the criticism of Latin poetry (with potential consequences for evaluation of Callimachus in a Ptolemaic context): the idea that programmatic is not limited to prologues and purple passages but infiltrates representations and narratives. Rivers, sources, thin and fat people have been scrutinized as metaliterary symbols. The results are frequently mechanical and sometimes far-fetched, but there is no way of screening out the possibility of such a reading once it is raised. The probability of this incorporation of metapoetry into the narrative is higher when we can demonstrate a contextual function of the

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<sup>24</sup> Dawson 1950; Bulloch 1973; Cairns 1979.

<sup>25</sup> Barchiesi 2001c: 219–27.

<sup>26</sup> See Höschele 2009, with bibliography.

ambiguity between referential language and programmatic doublespeak. Here are a few examples from a variety of generic contexts:

1. The hero Aeneas is invested with his mission in the *Aeneid* (3.94–98) by the direct voice of Apollo: the context is reminiscent of the epiphany in the Callimachean *Hymn to Apollo*,<sup>27</sup> so it may be relevant that the divine voice that refused a vast and impure river of songs, and praised pure and selective poetry (Call. *Hymn* 2.105–13), is now authorizing a new kind of epic, vast and sublime but also accountable for Callimachean standards of quality and learning. The echo of Callimachus casts interesting light on the mid-proœmium of the *Aeneid* (7.41–45),<sup>28</sup> where the formal announcement of a higher epic (“maius opus moveo”) is cast as a song about “kings and battles”, exactly the topic that Virgil had declined by alluding to the *Aetia* prologue back in *Eclogue* 6. Given the suggestive conventions of Roman intertextuality, the use of a formula originating with Callimachean polemics can be either a self-conscious measure of the distance between the various stages of Virgil’s career or a invitation to the reader to experience many subtle ways in which this new epic has incorporated not only Homer but Callimachus (through its artistry, the inclusion of nonmartial and erotic themes, the learned exploration of origins, the hints of bucolic aesthetics, the recuperation of the antiquarian past, the avoidance of formulaic style, and more)<sup>29</sup>—more likely, the allusion seeks to have it both ways.
2. The poem by Propertius about a celebration of the battle of Actium has multiple links with Apollo and starts with the invocation of Callimachean water for the poetic ritual (4.6.1–7). Scholars who are aware of this link are usually unresponsive when the victory poem unexpectedly ends with a reference to an old Roman defeat: now, after Actium, it is possible, O Crassus, to walk safely on the dark sands of the Euphrates (Prop. 4.6.83–84):

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<sup>27</sup> For other Callimachean intertexts, see Barchiesi 1994.

<sup>28</sup> Conte 1986; R. F. Thomas 1986a.

<sup>29</sup> On the exploration of origins, see, e.g., Tueller 2000.

gaude, Crasse, nigras, si quid sapis, inter harenas:

ire per Euphraten ad tua busta licet.

Rejoice, O Crassus, if you are sentient, in your heap of black sands:

now it is possible to cross the Euphrates and reach your grave.

Ovid picks up this detail in his mischievous dry run for a future panegyric on Caesarian victories over Parthian Euphrates (*AA* 1.179):

Parthe, dabis poenas: Crassi gaudete sepulti.

Parthian, you will atone: rejoice, you buried Crassi!

For a Callimachean poet, this opportunity, made possible by the settlement of a Roman frontier fort at Zeugma, a crossing point on the Euphrates, in 25 BC,<sup>30</sup> looks like a mixed blessing,<sup>31</sup> and Crassus—particularly in the plural, “Crassi,” encompassing the general and his son, who both fell at Carrhae—is a strangely appropriate name for someone (note the malicious “si quid sapis”) who should rejoice in this situation: *crassus*, “thick,” “dimwit,” had been used by thee republican poet Lucilius to express a contrast with *doctus*, “learned,” “sophisticated.”<sup>32</sup> By the end of the poem, the celebration of victory is reduced to patriotic one-liners, more reminiscent of military slogans on dice boards than of serious panegyric research, and the celebratory poets—a new kind of company for Propertius as we know him from Books 1–3—are soaked in wine, a hangover not fortified by Callimachean water, at dawn. Their specialization in conquered enemies (e.g., 4.6.77, “paludosos . . . Sygambros,” “the Sygambri with their bogs”) again does not sound promising by Callimachean standards.

3. It has not escaped attention that the Ovidian version of the story of Erysichthon, the impious tyrant who is punished by Demeter with insatiable hunger, is based primarily on

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<sup>30</sup> Millar 1993.

<sup>31</sup> So Heyworth 1994: cf. Call. *Hymn* 2.108–9, and contrast Cairns 2006.

<sup>32</sup> Pennacini 1968.

Callimachus' *Hymn to Demeter* but is an overblown, emphatic version of the Callimachean narrative (*Met.* 8.728–78).<sup>33</sup> One way to account for this difference is to look at the narrative context with an eye to Callimachean metapoetics.<sup>34</sup> it is a common device in Ovid's epic to have inset narrative and internal narrators, but the narrator of the Erysichthon story, Achelous, had been described by Ovid, in a first-person speech loaded with slightly bombastic sublimity (8.530–39), as a river in flood, dragging all sorts of wrecked objects, driftwood, mud, and carcasses in its spate. How likely is this choice to be devoid of malice? The insatiable appetite of Hunger is an anti-Callimachean symbol, just as the operations of Envy (a famous enemy of Callimachus) are a shocking innovation for the plot of Callimachus' *Hecale* in *Metamorphoses* 2.760–836.

The *Hecale*, Callimachus' own version of epic, is for Ovid another source of generic impurity: it licenses, through the imitation of a digression in Book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*, the only known episode in a major Roman epic poem with speaking animals—in this case, even as narrators, and loquacious ones; this theme is normally excluded from epic (*Met.* 2.540–632)<sup>35</sup> and reserved in ancient culture to a lowbrow, even servile genre such as the fable, with its various adaptations in prose, *iambus* or diatribe, and satire. In Book 8, when he readapts another unheroic section of the *Hecale*, the rustic dinner, to his own episode of Philemon and Baucis, Ovid pointedly notes that, of all the people present at the tale, Theseus was especially pleased (8.725–26): this must be because he is the guest of another poor and elderly woman farmer in the Callimachean model of this story of hospitality.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Van Tress 2004.

<sup>34</sup> Hinds 2006: 36.

<sup>35</sup> Contrast *Iliad* 19.418, and see Hollis 2009: 132 on how later epic examples are influenced by the *Hecale*.

<sup>36</sup> Kenney 1986: xxviii.

The long tale of Medea in Book 7 features many snapshots of epic and tragedy, including of course a witty abbreviated rewriting of the *Argonautica*, and the entire sequence ends when Medea literally lands into the opening episode of the *Hecale* (the recognition of Theseus: *Met.* 7.401–24): a few lines before, Ovid shows her flying over the island of the envious Telchines (7. 365–67: Rhodes, in fact), perhaps hinting that this is not going to be that kind of bad and slow epic.

As we saw above, the proemium to *Metamorphoses* 1 was already creating contrasting expectations about the adaptation of elegy to epic, and the reading of the poem is a dynamic exploration of the possibilities of this new kind of epic. Not all the meta-poetical readings that have followed in this wake are equally convincing; yet it is not worth throwing out the baby with the dirty water.

Conversely, the *Fasti* is marked from the beginning as a work in the tradition of the *Aetia*: the topic will be “tempora cum causis Latium digesta per annum” (“times, with their causes, distributed through the Latin year,” 1.1). Callimachean reference is present not only in *causis* (i.e., *aitia*) but in the interest in festivals and rituals (cf. the programmatic use of *dies*, *aras*), and even in *digesta*, because the fragmentation of the year (contrast “perpetuum . . . carmen” in *Met.* 1.3–4) dictates the fragmented format of the *Fasti*—and this is of course a poetic legacy of Callimachus. In this work Ovid will exploit a Callimachean poetics of surface fragmentation and deeper, implicit links and continuities. In this light, the first proemium links the rejection of martial epic, identified by the *Aeneid*’s titular incipit, *arma*,<sup>37</sup> and the choice of rituals and holidays as a topic, successfully negotiating the alternative between unwarlike elegy and Caesarian celebration that had been cultivated by the poets of love elegy (young Ovid included): *Caesaris arma canant alii; nos Caesaris aras* (1. 13).

The moment when the reader begins to suspect an increasing rapprochement with heroic epic comes when Ovid decides to incorporate in his elegiac poem a sequel to Virgil’s story of Dido and Aeneas. The episode (3.543–66) thus carries a considerable burden in the programmatic texture

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. Hinds 1992 *passim*.

of the *Fasti*. Expectations about Callimachean influence are not disappointed: we follow the exile of Anna, Dido's sister, and she becomes a guest of a king of a small Mediterranean island, a peaceful leader who is an enemy to war: “rex arma perosus | ‘nos sumus imbelles’ . . . ait” (“the king, an enemy of arms, said, ‘We are unwarlike . . .’ {hr#}” 3.577–78).

The name of the king is Battus, the royal ancestor who gives to Callimachus his alternative name, *Battiades* (regularly used by Roman poets, especially Catullus and Ovid; Propertius, in his five explicit mentions, always has *Callimachus*). This way the character anticipates in heroic times, but with an Augustan Roman accent, Callimachus' own avoidance of war and of military epic (and in a specifically Callimachean diction: with *arma perosus* compare *Epigr.* 28.1, “I hate the cyclic poem”).

An invocation of Callimachus within an epic plot is a plug for the poetics of Ovid's *Fasti*, the Augustan text with the strongest claim to be a full-scale imitation of the *Aetia*. Ovid had been taking a cue from the program announced but not systematically performed by Propertius at the start of Book 4 of his elegies: “sacra diesque canam et cognomina prisca locorum” (“I shall sing of rituals, days, and old names of places,” 4.1.69).<sup>38</sup> In his edition (1949–53: 1.xxxv), Pfeiffer explains that Propertius's Book 4 reproduces the narrative model of *Aetia* 3 and 4, whereas the *Fasti* is based on *Aetia* 1 and 2. This is a fundamental insight, but it can be slightly redefined. Propertius and Ovid are both taking into account, in their own ways, the double organization of the *Aetia*. Propertius looks at the separation of elegies in *Aetia* 3 and 4, but his choice of topics is actually closer to the material of *Aetia* 1 and 2. Ovid experiments with the difficult continuous structure of *Aetia* 1 and 2, but there are also effects of separation. If the reader of the *Fasti* is not able to sever some of the sequential episodes one from another, embarrassing effects will arise at the level of Augustan

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<sup>38</sup> Heyworth's OCT (2007b) accepts the conjecture *deos* for *dies*, but the sentence is in any case almost a *suggestio falsi* as far as the Propertian book is concerned; and in favor of *dies*, see the arguments of Hutchinson 2008 *ad loc.*

politics and ideology:<sup>39</sup> the choice between the two modes of reading offered by the *Aetia* template turns out to be not a purely formal one.

### Poetic Careers: Different Approaches

The other main aspect of Callimachean influence is the use of Callimachus as, so to speak, a first-person voice. Almost all the main triumviral and Augustan poets recur to Callimachus in order to create a sense of a poetic career, and they are very keen to adopt different strategies. Here follow some examples, all extending beyond the limits of a single work or occasional allusion.

Propertius uses Callimachus in a way that suggests a dynamics, not a fixed state. First of all he does not offer much airtime to Callimachus in his Book 1; only in hindsight, after reading the following books, will the reader recuperate some first hints. They seem to connect the poet's voice with the Callimachean character of Acontius from *Aetia* 3: note especially the motif of the solitary lover in 1.18,<sup>40</sup> and the brief but suggestive evocation of the idea of Love the Teacher from the same narrative in the programmatic proemial elegy 1.1.<sup>41</sup> Then at the beginning of Book 2.1.39–40) he adopts Callimachus as a predecessor, and later on *Callimachi* is the first word of Book 3 (the name of a Greek predecessor being a very unusual and marked choice for the incipit a Roman text:<sup>42</sup> Gallus and Propertius had been named in the two final distichs of the previous book, 2.34.91–94, in a sequence of elegiac authors); and *Callimachus Romanus* is the heart of the metapoetic debate in 4.1 (at line 64). In sum, the idea of the Callimachean poet is a dynamic process and a problematic issue. There is in fact a distance from Callimachus, in the first books because the status of Callimachus as an erotic poet is not such an obvious one (and has found too ready an acceptance

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<sup>39</sup> See in general Barchiesi 1997b.

<sup>40</sup> Cairns 1969.

<sup>41</sup> Acosta-Hughes and Stephens forthcoming.

<sup>42</sup> And a very misleading one: Germanicus and Phaedrus begin by quoting Aratus and Aesop, respectively; but they need to activate (at least initially) the idea of a systematic Romanization of their authors.

among Latinists); an elegiac poet who is in many ways more germane to Callimachean influence, Tibullus, finds an easier approach through the imitation of pederastic poetry,<sup>43</sup> and there is often a glide from “the Greek poet of love not war” to *princeps elegiae* (itself not an uncontested tradition); in Book 4, because aetiology is supposed to work as an upgrade from and an antidote to love poetry, but the project is sapped by the ambivalent voice of Horus, who is both an Apollo (the two names being interchangeable in Alexandria) and a charlatan, a Callimachean advisor and a butt of Callimachean *iambus*-style irony.

The important point for our discussion is that Callimachus is incorporated into an authorial narrative of metapoetics and career choices. No such neat evolutionary picture can be recuperated from Catullus, but this could be because of the state of our tradition. There is no way of knowing whether the order of poems in our exiguous manuscript tradition is authorial.<sup>44</sup> However, two points seem worthy of attention even if one assumes the ordering to be the result of editorial decisions: the sequence of elegiac poems begins with a poem (*Carm. 65*) which is both a cover letter for the next one and a programmatic text for the choice of writing elegy; now, the next one is the first extant example of an artistic translation of Callimachus in Latin (*Carm. 66, The Lock of Berenice*) and *Carmen 65* itself is marked by an allusion to the Acontius and Cydippe myth as told in the *Aetia*. Then *Carmen 116*, to the best of our knowledge the final poem in the elegiac sequence, and likely to be pointing forward to the composition of iambs,<sup>45</sup> mentions explicitly the offering of an adaptation from Callimachus in a more aggressive key. Taken together, those allusions could point to the choice of Callimachus as a programmatic model, a choice consonant with the adoption of

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Dawson 1950; Bulloch 1973.

<sup>44</sup> As, e.g., in Skinner 2003, with special attention to Callimachus as a model in 65–116; for a very skeptical approach to the *Catulli liber*, see Bellandi 2007; for a more nuanced approach, Barchiesi 2005.

<sup>45</sup> Macleod 1973.

Sappho as a model in *Carmen* 51,<sup>46</sup> and with the appropriation of the *Aetia* prologue in the poem contrasting Cinna with the muddy epicist Volusius (*Carm.* 95). Needless to say, Catullus is also using Callimachus in his own short epic, *Carmen* 64. Yet Catullus is different from the later elegiac authors, because he does not need a unified generic matrix. His main contribution to the history of Roman Callimacheanism is his choice of Callimachus as a model good to think with in programmatic contexts; this choice does not imply that other Greek poets, especially the more recent ones (Meleager, Parthenius, various epigrammatists) but also older ones on whom we are less well informed (e.g., Euphorion), are less important to him. Meleager, for example, is imitated in *Carmen* 1 of the *libellus*, just as he will contribute the initial motto to the Propertian collection and to Virgil's *Eclogues*.<sup>47</sup>

Virgil's approach is subtle and deeply integrated to the choice of an exemplary career: Callimachus is evoked in the programmatic mid-proœmia of the three works (*Ecl.* 6, *Ge.* 3, *Aen.* 7),<sup>48</sup> and the river Euphrates is regularly quoted six lines from the end of a book, as it is in the *Hymn to Apollo*.<sup>49</sup> The general impression is that the entire generic evolution from bucolics to didactic to heroic epic is self-consciously punctuated by Callimachean allusions, but there is also a careful attention to poetic autonomy. Virgil never claims Callimachus as a direct, overt model—the way he evokes Theocritus, Hesiod, and Homer, respectively—and apparently stays away from extended imitations. (See on Ovid below.) His use of Callimachus is ambiguous because it has to do with *recusatio* as well as with celebratory poetry, and Virgil wants his poetic triumph both ways. He

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<sup>46</sup> On the poetic genealogy Sappho-Callimachus, see Acosta-Hughes 2010a. The appropriations of Sappho and of Callimachus as an epigrammatic love poet surface together in the generation between Lucilius and Catullus; cf. Valerius Aedituus fr. 1 Courtney and Lutatius Catulus fr. 1 Courtney.

<sup>47</sup> Gutzwiller 1998: 320–21.

<sup>48</sup> R. F. Thomas 1999: 102–11; Conte 1992.

<sup>49</sup> R. F. Thomas 1999: 320–21.

constructs his very influential model of the Augustan *recusatio* on the basis of the *Aetia* prologue, but he is also able to use Callimachus in order to justify a new and improved approach to grand epic and to praise poetry.

Ovid is the poet who, besides the usual buzzwords of Wimmelian poetics (the “dirty river, pure fountain” tradition of Catullus, Virgil, and Propertius), does the most to integrate Callimachus in a clearly articulated literary system. He contrasts Callimachus with Homer and with Ennius. He is also the Roman poet who uses Callimachus the most in actual practice, not just in metapoetic discussions. In the *Metamorphoses* there are sizable continuous narrative sections taken up from the works of Callimachus—and it is hard to prove something like that for Catullus, Virgil, Propertius, or Horace. In the *Fasti*, even the basic idea of the poem is indebted to the *Aetia*—a credential that no other Roman poet flaunts, although of course the poem has a strong autonomy and remains ideologically a very Roman artifact. When all this is said and done, Ovid never claims to be a Roman Callimachus—he seems to be, with Tibullus, the first Roman author of poetry who does not single out any one Greek author as a role model while he engages so many of them. In this sense he deserves to be considered as the first truly imperial poet.

Horace’s approach is very different from all the others’. In the *Epodes*, one has the impression that Callimachus is being constructed as a dove in the iambic tradition,<sup>50</sup> and thus marginalized, whereas Archilochus is front and center as a classical model: the rare echoes of the Alexandrian *Iambi* are in a mellow mode, very different from the animal spirits of the Archilochean tradition. On the other hand, the entire negotiation with Archilochus (a model larger than life, dangerous, impossible to impersonate) shows that the work done by Callimachus on Hipponax has been deeply absorbed and exploited by Horace; and the *Iambi* are a recurring presence in the Roman tradition of satire, and in Horace’s version of it.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Barchiesi 2001b.

<sup>51</sup> Freudenburg 1993.

In his lyric poetry, Horace develops a parallel strategy: Alcaeus and Sappho are recentered as classical authors, Callimachean contributions to lyric are not showcased (although they are real),<sup>52</sup> the work done by Callimachus on the lyric canon is appropriated, but the poet's voice pointedly avoids repeating the Callimachean slogans of the *neoteroi* and the elegists, who are the real adversaries or competitors of Horace's lyric project.

It would be easy to compile anthologies of pro-Callimachean and anti-Callimachean statements or sentiments;<sup>53</sup> more important, the references are often dialectically combined in the same passage.<sup>54</sup> For example, Horace contrasts Callimachus and Philodemus in *Satire* 1.2.101–10 in ways that suggest that Callimachus is a classic of love poetry;<sup>55</sup> yet he also comments that those “little verses” and their elitist poetics of desire do not have the healing power that a philosophy of life could claim. In *Ep.* 2.2.99–101 it is an upgrade (*plus*) to be a new Mimnermus instead of a new Callimachus, although both models are to be contrasted with Horace's standard as a new Alcaeus. The poet is *inuidia maior* (*Carm.* 2.20. 4; cf. *Call. Epigr.* 21.4), yet in other contexts he has a positive approach to *pondus*, “heaviness,” “serious” or “weighty” poetry (*Ep.* 1.19.42; 2.2.112.; *Ars* 310) and a negative one to lightness; he seems to be pointed when he praises a writer who is like a river, “uemens et liquidus puroque simillimus amni” (*Ep.* 2.2.120)—that is, a big, sweeping, pure river, a paradox in terms of the Callimachean opposition between the Euphrates and the pure drops from the spring. (Cf. the famous “distancing praise” of Pindar in *Carm.* 4.2.5–8.) This model of a poet who is helpful to the community (the crucial new idea in the literary *Epistles*) follows after a critical distancing from the new Callimachuses of elegy. (See above on *Ep.* 2.2.99–101.) Although we should take into account the various strategic situations of each and every context and genre, there is at least one shared aspect: Horace foists on his competitors the mantle of a Callimachean

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<sup>52</sup> Pasquali 1964b.

<sup>53</sup> The most relevant passages are in Bornmann 1996; cf. also Cody 1976 and Coffta 2002.

<sup>54</sup> For examples of this dialectical reading, see Freudenburg 2001: 37–41; D'Alessio 2006.

<sup>55</sup> Hunter 2006a: 143.

orthodoxy, often to be interpreted as neoteric, elegiac programme, and reserves for himself the freedom to adapt Callimachus to his own agenda, while learning from his approach to the poetic tradition.

### Final Questions

Two general questions should be kept in mind. The first is about the difference between interpreting Callimachus in a third-century context and viewing Callimachean poetics through its Roman imitators. The second is the question of periodization in those two different frameworks. If we are still willing to use categories such as Alexandrian and Hellenistic (with all their political baggage and interpretive potential), does it follow that those categories are valid in a Roman *emic* perspective and can be confidently applied to Roman appropriations of Callimachus? The two key discussions for my final questions are Alan Cameron 1995 and Richard Hunter 2006a.

1. Alan Cameron has brilliantly succeeded in showing that the polemical reference in the *Aetia* prologue is not as straightforward as one would surmise from the Roman imitations: it is not necessarily epic that Callimachus is worried about. This success, however, is my own interpretation of Cameron's results: his own interpretation seems to be that the Romans did not care about epic either,<sup>56</sup> and that once we manage to fix the meaning of the *Prologue* in its original setting, ancient responses will follow suit. As far as Callimachus' own horizon is concerned, I hasten to add that new papyrological discoveries can always tilt the balance: we still have very little of Hellenistic epic in the papyri; but what if we decide that the lengthy, long-winded *Argonautica* by Cleon of Curium is representative of a wider trend?<sup>57</sup> Still, one aspect of Cameron's position remains convincing:<sup>58</sup> the enthusiasm of the discovery of the *Aetia* prologue, followed by rediscoveries of the Callimacheanism of Virgil, Propertius, Horace, and Ovid, has generated a Romanized reading of the poetic agenda of Callimachus.

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<sup>56</sup> Alan Cameron 1995: 454–83.

<sup>57</sup> On the testimonia, see D'Alessio 2000; Pontani 2007.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004: 69.

This is a valuable critique of previous approaches. Yet Cameron's *pars construens* also shows that the confusion between a historicized reading and a reception-oriented reading is a tenacious one. He has important things to say on Callimachus and elegy (even if I think that the issue of Hellenistic epic has been dismissed too quickly), but at times he seems to claim that the Roman poets must have had the intellectual honesty to read Callimachus the way that he, Alan Cameron, does, and that their *recusationes* do not need the epic tradition, not even as a straw genre. This argument does not provide any extra mileage for the interpretation of Callimachus in a Ptolemaic context, and it severely distorts the agenda of the Roman poets.

2. At the end of a nuanced study of Roman appropriations, a study that answers my first question without collapsing the difference between historicized and Romanized Callimachus, Richard Hunter raises another important point.<sup>59</sup> How far did the Romans observe the distinction that we make and construct between classical and Hellenistic? And how far did it matter to the Augustans that their own age was separated from the great poets of the Hellenistic kingdoms by more than two centuries? It is not just a matter of perception of time, because this leads to the crucial question on whether Callimachus, Theocritus, and the epigrammatists would be perceived as classical models or as latecomers and moderns. Hunter suggests that there was a Roman approach that would respect Ptolemaic Alexandria while promoting aggression against Cleopatra's Alexandria. What is really helpful in his approach is (just as in Cameron's case) his critique of underhistoricized interpretation: it is true that Latinists and even Hellenists have often allowed the categories of Alexandrianism and Hellenistic a power that they cannot claim, as if Propertius and Virgil were responding through the same filter as *fin-de-siècle* Europeans (through ideas of Orientalism, decadence, or avant-garde, languid sensibility). The idea of a positive recuperation of Ptolemaic

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<sup>59</sup> Hunter 2006a: 141–46.

Alexandria certainly tallies with appropriations where Callimachus is being invoked as a praise poet.<sup>60</sup>

Yet it may be that we are not yet ready to answer this second question, although it remains an important one.<sup>61</sup> We must distance ourselves from the modern category of Alexandrian latecomers when reading Roman imitators of Callimachus, but there are many indications that identifying Callimachus as just another Greek classic simply will not do. We need to take on board Hunter's point about admiration of Alexandria, not just aggression and hatred; but there is still the question of how far appropriations of Callimachus are examples of a more generalized Roman Hellenism or something more special and, so to speak, local. In the light of recent interest in the plurality of Greek cultures within Hellenism, this could be an interesting discussion: How far are the Romans interested in a specific, differentiated approach to, let us say, Athenian, Graeco-Asian, Alexandrian idioms within their own idea of Hellenization?

A thick description of this phenomenon will require careful investigation not only of poetic texts but of many aspects of architecture, material culture, visual experience, and daily life in late republican and Augustan Rome; we will also need to take into account the ideas of moral exemplarity and educational value, and of different appraisals and evaluations of the Greek past and contemporary achievement. It is also important to bear in mind, because this aspect has been neglected in the enthusiasm of intertextual agnition and recovery of fragments, that a number of Roman poets who are echoing Callimachus (but also Theocritus, Herodas, Posidippus, and others) are doing that in a potentially loaded context: a context in which a model from or about Alexandria is invoked in close proximity with a reference to the Roman conquest of the Ptolemaic kingdom. It is up to us—and it was up to Roman readers back then—to decide whether we want to insulate the poetic references

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Heyworth 1994.

<sup>61</sup> On ancient classicisms and their construction of the past, see the essays in Porter 2005.

as manifestations of aesthetic preferences or to integrate them into the aesthetics of Roman politics.<sup>62</sup>

The discovery that the proœmial section of *Georgics* 3 is substantially based on the proœmial elegy of *Aetia* 3, *The Victory of Berenice*,<sup>63</sup> has been a major step in the reappraisal of Callimachean reception at Rome; but not once in his important paper does Richard Thomas mention that the historical context for the Virgilian poem is victory over Alexandria. Yet in Roman culture the idea of appropriating enemy culture and turning it into an instrument of domination has a long history, and Virgilian allusions to Ennius in the same context point toward such triumphal poetics. We should criticize, following Hunter's approach, unreflected and untheorized use of "Alexandrian" as a timeless category of literature; but we also need to take into account contexts where poetry from Alexandria is being appropriated with reference to the conquest of Ptolemaic Egypt.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Cf., e.g., Fowler 2009 for the general idea.

<sup>63</sup> R. F. Thomas 1983 = 1999: 68–100.

<sup>64</sup> For recent examples of this approach, note especially Stephens 2004b; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens forthcoming; Hutchinson 2002, discussing the allusion to Posidippus at the end of Propertius 3.11. I have a paper in progress, "Alexandria in Rome, Rome as Alexandria," where I develop this line of argument more systematically; and see especially the splendid discussion of the *laudes Italiae* of the *Georgics* as an extended, implied syncrisis with Ptolemaic Egypt in Hunter 2008b: 380–82.